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STORYTELLING AMONG MULTILINGUAL SUCCESSIVE ARABIC-DUTCH CHILDREN: A COMPARISON WITH MONOLINGUAL DUTCH CHILDREN

Background

As a narrative task is less language specific than some standardised language test batteries, the examination of storytelling could be a good addition to the language test protocol in multilingual children who consult a speech language pathologist. Previous research proved that multilingual children achieve the same results as monolingual children on macrostructural elements of storytelling, such as story structuring and describing the internal states of the characters, but score less on language specific elements. This has not been investigated yet in specific multilingual populations.

Research Questions

- Do multilingual Arabic-Dutch speaking children score less on storytelling tasks measured with RLS (Dutch version) than monolingual Dutch speaking controls matched on age and gender?
- Is there a difference between their scores on macrostructural and microstructural elements of the storytelling task?

Participants

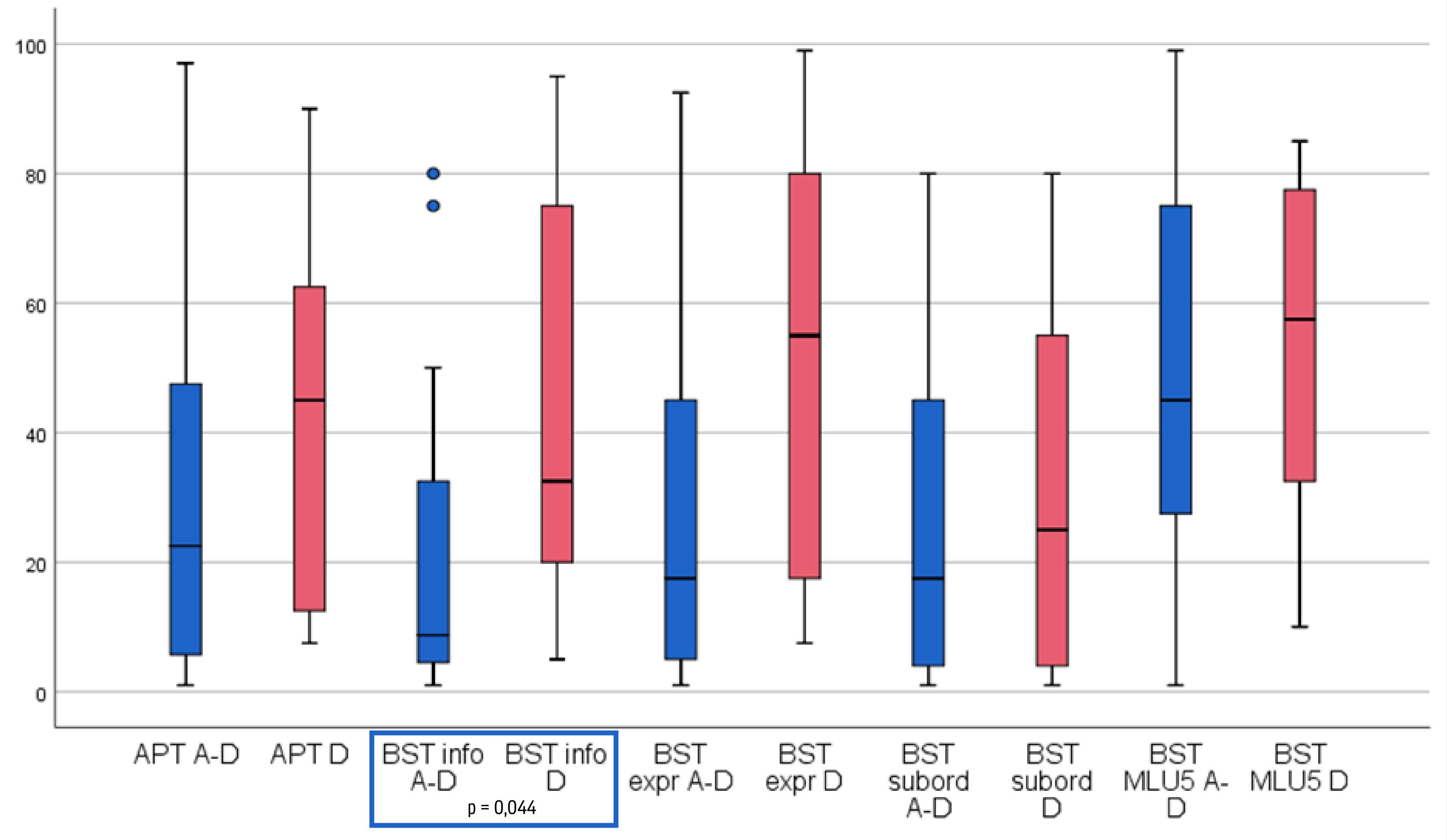
Inclusion and exclusion criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age: 7 – 10 years • Born in Belgium • Normal (language) development • Language spoken by parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject group = Arabic • Control group = Dutch • No SLT for language problems • Normal hearing function, reported by parents • Normal cognitive development, reported by parents • Singleton

Arabic-Dutch children (n=16)	Dutch children (n=16)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11 ♀ - 5 ♂ ▪ Mean age = 8,9 years ▪ Language spoken at home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arabic: 7 (43,8%) ▪ A&D: 9 (56,3%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11 ♀ - 5 ♂ ▪ Mean age = 8,8 years ▪ Language spoken at home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dutch: 16 (100%)

Methods

<div>Questionnaires:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociodemographic characteristics • Medical background • General development • Language development 	<div>Renfrew Language Scales (Dutch version)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Picture Test • Bus Story Test
<div>Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test</div>	

Difference multilingual (A-D) and monolingual (D) children



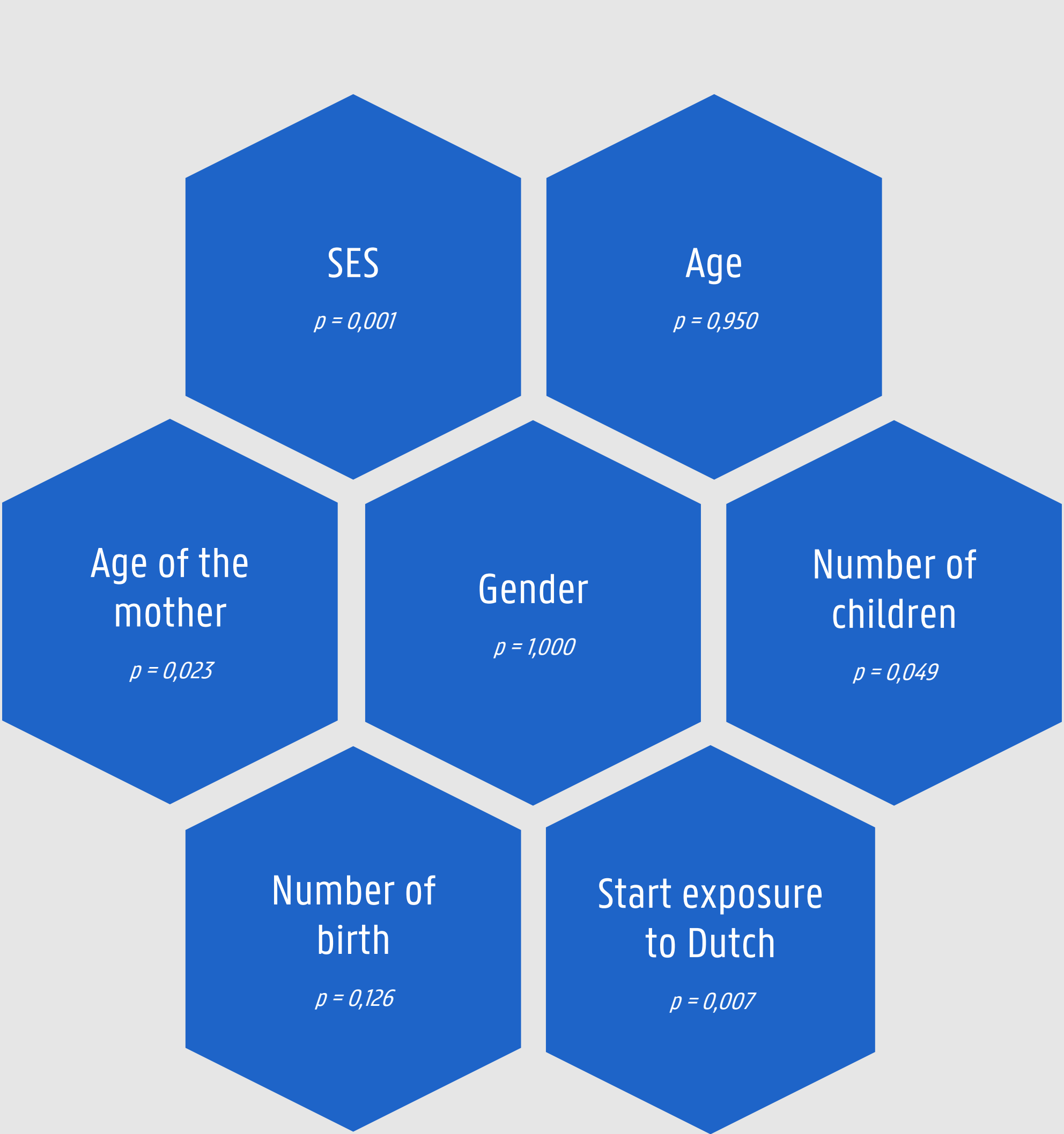
Percentage clinical scores

Subtest	Multilinguals	Monolinguals
APT	31,3 %	18,8 %
BST information	50,1 %	18,8 %
BST expressions	31,3 %	6,3 %
BST subordinations	37,5 %	31,3 %
BST MLU5	12,6 %	0 %

Qualitative analysis

Multilinguals	Monolinguals
Mistakes in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verbs: past tens ▪ Congruence ▪ Word order ▪ Wrong subordination ▪ Defined article ▪ Content words 	Mistakes in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verbs: past tens
More mistakes per expression	Less mistakes per expression

Influencing factors



Conclusion

In comparison with monolingual Dutch speaking children, multilingual successive Arabic-Dutch speaking children:

- exchange the same amount of information on sentence level.
- exchange less information on story level.
- have the same quantitative output
- make more linguistic mistakes, such as wrong content words, articles, past tenses and congruence of subject and verb.

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